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Spring 2015

Fostering Independence and Employability

Staff throughout Job Corps are supporting their center's Disability Program by providing center-wide accommodations for students with disabilities that will foster student independence during and after Job Corps. Gary JCC has demonstrated a commitment to going above and beyond to accommodate students with disabilities by promoting a culture of acceptance and implementing accommodations that are ability-focused and promote student independence. Brenda Brooks, the Health and Wellness Manager and co-Disability Coordinator, has shared two fantastic examples of how the center has accommodated students with disabilities.

Machinist Trade Students Help a Fellow Student

Destiny, a student in the medical assistant trade, has difficulty using one of her arms and hands. One of the skills she is required to master to complete the Training Achievement Record (TAR) for the medical assistant trade is to draw up medication from a vial to a syringe without getting air into the syringe. This task was daunting to Destiny; so Ms. Brooks took the problem to the machinist trade instructor and students and asked for assistance.

She provided a very crude drawing, much like a cave painting, of a prototype that might help Destiny meet the skill requirement. The instructor and students went to work, and as seen in pictures, they rose to the occasion and built a prototype for Destiny to use to accomplish her TAR requirement! There is no apparatus of this nature available commercially, but our machinist students and instructor are continuing to work on this prototype to make it even more user friendly for Destiny. Great work and a wonderful example of the caring and giving attitudes of staff and students for each other.



Destiny using the prototype in the medical assistant trade



Students in machinist trade along with their instructor and Destiny

Fostering Independence and Employability (cont'd)

Accommodations for a Student who is Deaf

In December of 2013, a student with a hearing impairment arrived at Gary JCC. The student used hearing aids in both ears and read lips when in close proximity to an individual. In addition to being deaf, the student has also been diagnosed with a learning disability. Prior to the student's arrival, the Reasonable Accommodation Committee (RAC) met with the student to discuss his accommodation needs. It was determined that a sign language interpreter would be necessary.

The center submitted an accommodation funding request to the Dallas Regional Office. Gary JCC requested funding for an interpreter, an FM Digital Communicator, an Android tablet, a wireless data plan, and deaf link services. Prior to submitting the funding request, the center contacted its Regional Disability Coordinator for assistance in completing the request and providing appropriate documentation. The funding request was approved and the student began his trainings at Gary JCC. In addition to the accommodations mentioned

above, the student also received unlimited time for testing, closed captioning, books on tape, cues for timeout/break, large assignments broken down into smaller parts, increased wait time for responses, copies of notes, extended time for assignment completion, reduced content, and speech input software.



The student completed the career preparation phase with promising evaluations and began training in the welding trade soon thereafter. The student continued to demonstrate success in the Job Corps program as he completed more than 70% of welding, and decided to apply for advanced training. The center assisted in helping him apply for advanced training; however, the student later decided he wanted to pursue employment after completing the program.

The student used an interpreter throughout his training. His welding instructor utilized his interpreter in a quite unique way. The instructor would give the student a complex assignment without the use of the interpreter. The student would then recall or repeat the demands of the assignment to the interpreter using sign language to confirm understanding. On weekends, the student utilized his iPhone to assist with interpreting and communicating.

The student completed his trade and gained 3.7 levels in reading, finishing at 5.7 grade level and gained 6.7 levels in math, finishing at 12.9 grade level. The student became a leader in the dormitory with staff reporting that he was always cooperative. During the transition phase, several applications and employer contacts were completed on his behalf. This is an excellent example of how a center can help a student be successful in the Job Corps program by implementing center-wide accommodations that promote student independence and employability.

Note: A center can submit a funding request to the appropriate Regional Office for National Office funding assistance for high-cost accommodations (i.e., those greater than \$5,000). A Regional Disability Coordinator can offer assistance to centers throughout the reasonable accommodation funding request process.

Program Instruction Notice 14-24

Program Instruction Notice 14-24 reinforces policies already found in the PRH that prohibit re-certification of eligibility by centers, except in a few, rare circumstances and reminds centers that only authorized forms can be used to collect applicant/student health, and/or disability information, and/or other personal information.

Admissions Counselors (ACs) determine eligibility using the Essential Admissions Requirements (EARs) located in PRH Exhibit 1-1. A center is not permitted to revisit an AC's determination that an applicant meets an EAR and is qualified for Job Corps, even if the center disagrees with the AC's determination of the applicant's qualification(s) except in the following limited circumstances:

The center receives **new information** that:

- a. Could not have been reasonably known at the time the applicant's qualification for admission;
- b. Indicates the applicant offered enrollment may no longer meet an EAR.



Centers cannot use forms/questionnaires that inadvertently pose questions that revisit eligibility criteria when there is no allowable justification to do so (i.e., new information). The center may not ask questions that are either duplicates of those listed as EARs (PRH Exhibit 1-1), or close variations of those questions that essentially serve to recertify a particular requirement except in the new information circumstance described above.

Therefore, the center may not ask generally about an applicant's court history background unless the applicant voluntarily discloses this information. The center may inquire if there have been any changes to the applicant's status since he or she was found eligible, and explain the legal restrictions that might apply to actually obtaining employment in a specific career technical trade. For example, the student may be unable to be hired as a security guard if s/he has certain prior convictions on his/her record.

The center may review the information in the applicant's file, such as on the Job Corps Health Questionnaire (ETA 653), the accompanying documentation that is medically related to the information on the questionnaire, or that the applicant has otherwise voluntarily disclosed, to determine the health needs of the applicant, and/or to determine whether the applicant has a disability, mental health, or medical condition that likely poses a significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others.

Center file review teams may not request an applicant disclose additional medical and/or disability-related information that was not already voluntarily disclosed. Some centers are using their own disability and/or health forms/questionnaires to gather and document additional health/disability information that is not related to previously disclosed health conditions or disability status.

For example, a center may not ask an applicant if he or she has a learning disability when the individual did not check an affirmative response to having a learning disability on the ETA 653, and/or did not provide any supporting documentation that a learning disability exists. The provision of an IEP that documents one type of disability classification does not give license to the applicant file review team or RAC to inquire about "possible" additional conditions or classifications.

Spotlight on Assistive Technology: Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program

Now more than ever, individuals with disabilities have access to Assistive Technology (AT) that helps to bridge the gap between workplace barriers and workplace responsibilities; bringing out the capabilities in all individuals. Obtaining AT devices does not have to be complicated nor costly. For center staff, the Computer/Electronic Accommodations Program (CAP) is an excellent resource for determining AT accommodations and developing staff training.



Accommodation Solutions Search Engine

CAP provides an interactive search engine that offers accommodation solutions for various types of disabilities/functional limitations (i.e., blind/low vision, cognitive, communication, deaf/hard of hearing, and dexterity). The accommodations and AT can be used to maintain, increase, or improve students' ability to perform during the program and after. For example, if the user searches cognitive memory/cueing aids, word prediction software, voice recorders and other AT solutions are discussed.

Staff Training Ideas

CAP also offers trainings on disability etiquette and awareness topics, providing accommodations for various disabilities including people with dexterity disabilities, people with cognitive disabilities, people with hearing disabilities, people with vision disabilities and other topics appropriate for Job Corps staff. These videos provide excellent resources for meeting the required annual all staff Disability Program training!



Videos are on CAP's YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/thedodcap and <http://www.cap.mil/newsevents/Training.aspx>.

Update: Teresa Graduates!

Teresa, a student at Phoenix Job Corps has recently graduated! Teresa was featured in last quarter's newsletter in the article *Helping Paws: Animals as Accommodations*. Teresa has successfully completed Job Corps with the assistance of her service dog Bear and other reasonable accommodations. Teresa is now off to college where Bear will remain with her. Congratulations Teresa, we wish you all the best in your future endeavors as you continue to shine!



Teresa (front row, left) and her service dog, Bear
with her graduating class at the Phoenix JCC

Disability Resources

Updated! Job Corps Disability Program Desk Reference Guide for Disability Coordinators

The Job Corps Disability Desk Reference Guide (DRG) for Disability Coordinators is an effective resource to utilize in helping to ensure Job Corps centers are meeting all the requirements for the Disability Program.

- The DRG covers the Disability Program requirements including the critical processes of applicant file review and reasonable accommodation in detail
- The DRG was just updated and is available to view or download on the Job Corps Disability Web site on the disability home page under “Tools”



Reminder! PRH Change in Required New Staff Training

- PRH Change Notice 14-24 was released on July 18, 2014
- Per the Change Notice centers are required to complete the following:
 - Yearly training for all center staff about the Disability Program or a Disability-related topic
 - Reasonable accommodation training for new staff within the first 90 days of employment and yearly thereafter. To meet this requirement, staff must complete the *Supporting Students with Disabilities in the Job Corps Program* training available in the Staff Instructional Management Online Network (SIMON), located in CITRIX

**Human Resource staff should maintain certifications of completion from all staff trainings*

Upcoming Job Corps Disability Webinars		
Webinar	Date	Time (EST)
Preparing for Your Disability Program ROCA	March 10, 2015 March 12, 2015	4 PM EST & 11 AM EST
Accommodating Students with Drug and Alcohol Disabilities	March 24, 2015 March 26, 2015	4 PM EST & 11 AM EST

Regional Disability Coordinators by Region		
Boston and Philadelphia	Atlanta and Dallas Regions	Chicago and San Francisco
Kristen Philbrook 301-608-3290 ext. 602 kristen.philbrook@humanitas.com	Jasmin Merritt 301-608-3290 ext. 603 jasmin.merritt@humanitas.com	Kimberly Knodel 301-608-3290 ext. kimberly.knodel@humanitas.com

E-mail your comments or suggestions to:
Carol Abnathy, National Health and Wellness Manager
abnathy.carol@dol.gov